

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2013 10:56:18 PM
To: Karl, Richard; Michelle DeLong; Jase Bolger; Kate Segal; Mike Nofs; John Sobojinski
Subject: Kalamazoo River

We have fished the Kalamazoo River for many years and have fished it from west of Albion to 35th St. in Galesburg and to all stretches in between. All of us do "catch and release" smallmouth bass fishing.

When the river reopened June 22nd, 2012 for public use, we were on the river early that morning. We were having a great morning until we ran into many work boats which were churning up the river, making fishing futile beyond that point. We floated from the 15 Mile Rd. bridge to Ceresco and Bridge Park to Paddlers Grove twelve to fifteen times last year and this is our findings:

1. Water - Water clarity was very good. Could see bottom clearly unless we were over deep holes. We drag an anchor or large chain behind the boat to slow us down. With the very low water levels, our oars hit bottom a lot. Never did we see any oil on the bottom or sheen on top.
2. Fisheries - On each stretch of river, we caught 3-4 inch smallmouths showing natural reproduction occurred since the oil spill. The bigger fish up to 20 inches had a great length to girth ratio, showing a good forage base was present. We caught several fish that coughed up crayfish and small minnows reeling them back to the boat or inside the boat when they were landed.
3. Wildlife - We saw muskrats, turtles, geese, ducks, heron, belted kingfishers, bald eagles and osprey. Since the heron, kingfishers, eagles and osprey eat and feed their young what they catch in the river, we would say the river is very clean. Also, geese and ducks feed off the food they find in vegetation. This is the third winter since the oil spill and vegetation dies down each winter, so any checking of new vegetation should be a very low priority.
4. Workers - Every trip we did have had several boats running up and down the river. They at sometimes were running way to fast creating huge waves crashing into the rivers' banks. Sometimes they would go close to shore with their jet engines and water plus river bottom would go up three to four feet in the air. What's that all about? To us they were doing way more harm than good.
5. ENBRIDGE - We feel Enbridge has done a very good job in cleaning the river, stabilizing banks and vegetation control. They have built new and upgraded many facilities along the river for the public to enjoy. We feel Enbridge has done their due diligence.

The wildlife living above and below the water has been under great stress for almost three years now. We hope all major activities such as shoreline reconstruction and/or dredging have been completed, if not please advise. With a new spawning season approaching, could we limit workers boats to one day a week or one day every other week? Any more than that we feel is a huge overkill and a big waste of our tax dollars.

Please EPA and DEQ back off a little and let the river start healing itself. If you have any questions or comments' regarding our river travels, please contact us by email or phone.

Sincerely,

Kalamazoo River users(fishermen, kayakers and canoeists)

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